

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2788

To direct the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to conduct a pilot program to raise awareness about telework among small business employers, and to encourage such employers to offer telework options to employees.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 17, 2003

Mr. UDALL of Colorado (for himself, Mr. FROST, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. ISSA, Mr. RUSH, Mr. ROSS, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD, Mr. FILNER, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, and Mr. WYNN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Small Business

A BILL

To direct the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to conduct a pilot program to raise awareness about telework among small business employers, and to encourage such employers to offer telework options to employees.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Small Business
5 Telework Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 The Congress finds that—

3 (1) telework reduces the volume of peak com-
4 muter traffic, thereby reducing traffic congestion
5 and air pollution;

6 (2) the Nation's communities can benefit from
7 telework, which gives workers more time to spend at
8 home with their families;

9 (3) it is in the national interest to raise aware-
10 ness within the small business community of
11 telework options for employees;

12 (4) the small business community can benefit
13 from offering telework options to employees because
14 such options make it easier for small employers to
15 retain valued employees and employees with irre-
16 placeable institutional memory;

17 (5) companies with telework programs have
18 found that telework can boost employee productivity
19 5 percent to 20 percent, thereby saving businesses
20 valuable resources and time;

21 (6) 60 percent of the workforce is involved in
22 information work (an increase of 43 percent since
23 1990), allowing and encouraging decentralization of
24 paid work to occur;

25 (7) individuals with disabilities, including dis-
26 abled American veterans, who own or are employed

1 by small businesses could benefit from telework to
2 their workplaces; and

3 (8) telework has the potential to provide more
4 employment opportunities in rural communities.

5 **SEC. 3. SMALL BUSINESS TELEWORK PILOT PROGRAM.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with this Act, the
7 Administrator shall conduct, in not more than 5 of the
8 Small Business Administration’s regions, a pilot program
9 to raise awareness about telework among small business
10 employers and to encourage such employers to offer
11 telework options to employees.

12 (b) SPECIAL OUTREACH TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DIS-
13 ABILITIES.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Adminis-
14 trator shall make special efforts to conduct outreach to—

15 (1) businesses owned by or employing individ-
16 uals with disabilities, and disabled American vet-
17 erans in particular;

18 (2) Federal, State, and local agencies having
19 knowledge and expertise in assisting individuals with
20 disabilities or disabled American veterans; and

21 (3) any group or organization, the primary pur-
22 pose of which is to aid individuals with disabilities
23 or disabled American veterans.

24 (c) PERMISSIBLE ACTIVITIES.—In carrying out the
25 pilot program, the Administrator may only—

1 (1) produce educational materials and conduct
2 presentations designed to raise awareness in the
3 small business community of the benefits and the
4 ease of telework;

5 (2) conduct outreach—

6 (A) to small business concerns that are
7 considering offering telework options; and

8 (B) as provided in subsection (b); and

9 (3) acquire telework technologies and equip-
10 ment to be used for demonstration purposes.

11 (d) SELECTION OF REGIONS.—In determining which
12 regions will participate in the pilot program, the Adminis-
13 trator shall give priority consideration to regions in which
14 Federal agencies and private-sector employers have dem-
15 onstrated a strong regional commitment to telework.

16 **SEC. 4. REPORT TO CONGRESS.**

17 Not later than 2 years after the first date on which
18 funds are appropriated to carry out this Act, the Adminis-
19 trator shall transmit to the Committee on Small Business
20 of the House of Representatives and the Committee on
21 Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate a re-
22 port containing the results of an evaluation of the pilot
23 program and any recommendations as to whether the pilot
24 program, with or without modification, should be extended

1 to include the participation of all Small Business Adminis-
2 tration regions.

3 **SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.**

4 In this Act—

5 (1) the term “Administrator” means the Ad-
6 ministrator of the Small Business Administration;

7 (2) the term “disability” has the same meaning
8 as in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities
9 Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12102);

10 (3) the term “pilot program” means the pro-
11 gram established under section 3; and

12 (4) the term “telework” means the performance
13 of any portion of work functions by an employee out-
14 side the normal place of business under cir-
15 cumstances which reduce or eliminate the need to
16 commute.

17 **SEC. 6. TERMINATION.**

18 The pilot program shall terminate 2 years after the
19 first date on which funds are appropriated to carry out
20 this Act.

21 **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

22 There is authorized to be appropriated to the Small
23 Business Administration \$5,000,000 to carry out this Act.

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